

Message to Constituents

U.S. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

Representing the 7th U.S. Congressional District of Maryland

December 17, 2004
<http://www.mail.house.gov/cummings>

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Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-4741 (tel.) (202) 225-3178 (fax)



Dear Constituent:

It is both a privilege and an honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue my outreach efforts to inform you of legislative action. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.

To better serve you closer to home, I invite you to visit or contact one of my district offices, listed on the following pages. In Howard County, my staff and I make regular outreach visits at various community centers. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Elijah E. Cummings

Congressman Cummings Votes for Passage of Intelligence Reform Bill

On December 7, Congressman Cummings was joined by 335 of his colleagues in approving the conference report for the Intelligence Reform bill, S.2845. The conference report (final version of the bill that reconciles the House and Senate versions) passed the Senate the next day and is expected to be signed by the President shortly. The bill adopts the bulk of the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, which was established to evaluate why and how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred, and how such attacks could be averted in the future.

"The Intelligence Reform Act will help safeguard Americans against potential terrorist attacks, and allow appropriate federal authorities to better assess threats to our nation's security," Congressman Cummings said. "This legislation is especially important to my constituents in Maryland's 7th Congressional District due our proximity to Washington, D.C., the Port of Baltimore, and other highly-targeted areas."

The legislation will benefit the residents of this region by providing additional help for emergency responders; enhancing public safety communications between fire fighters, law enforcement and medical personnel during a crisis, improving foreign relations with the Middle East and South Asia and improving aviation and maritime security.

The main purpose of the bill, however, involves improved information sharing and processing among relevant federal agencies regarding threats to our national security. The legislation addresses these concerns by:

- Establishing the position of Director of National Intelligence, who will oversee the 16 U.S. intelligence agencies, have full budget authority and manage foreign and domestic activities of the intelligence community.
- Establishing a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) that will coordinate and unify all elements of counterterrorism operations planning.
- Creating a Privacy and Civil Liberties Board that will review the practices of counter-terrorism activities. This provision will help create a balance between national security and civil liberties.



Congressman Cummings is greeted by Eyre Tour and Travel President Ron Eyre before touring the commuter bus facility in Glenelg.

Congressman Cummings Discusses Transportation Issues with Eyre Bus Company in Howard County

On December 10, Congressman Cummings met with Eyre Tour and Travel President Ron Eyre to learn more about the commuter bus and tour service company's impact on the Baltimore region. The meeting involved a discussion with company executives about transportation issues.

Founded in 1947 in Daisy, MD, the company has grown from operating just one school bus to running a fleet of 40 buses. With 100 employees, the company provides commuter bus services from Columbia to Baltimore. The company is now based in Glenelg in Howard County.

"As a Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, it is important for me to assess the needs of transportation companies in my district," Congressman Cummings said. "By meeting with Eyre officials, I became more informed about the issues confronting the this charter and travel business such as the impact of high oil prices and the rising costs of insurance."

Congressman Cummings Tours NeighborCare Pharmacy

On Thursday, December 2, Congressman Cummings visited and toured NeighborCare, a pharmacy production facility in Annapolis Junction, Maryland. The company delivers prescription drugs to 30,000 residents of long term care and skilled nursing homes.

Congressman Cummings made the visit in order to learn more about services that provide low-cost prescription drugs to seniors and people with special needs. He also wanted to learn more about the company's economic impact on the Howard County and Baltimore region.

During the tour, Congressman Cummings met with company co-founders Marvin Freedenberg and Milton Moskowitz, Senior Regional Vice President Stanton Ades, Director of Operations Richard Biava, Director of Pharmacy Jay Krosnick, and several other company employees.

Based in Baltimore, NeighborCare provides prescription drug services to more than 260,000 people nationwide. The company employs more than 1,200 people in Maryland.

Notice of New Location

The Washington Office of Congressman Elijah E. Cummings has moved to a new location.

We are now located in
2235 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Telephone and Fax remain the same:
(202) 225-4741 (telephone)
(202) 225-3178 (fax)

Federal Grants Awarded to the 7th Congressional District

No.	Recipient	Amount	Purpose
1.	Lockheed Martin Information Technology Group in Baltimore	\$19,868,004	Contract to provide technology services to the Social Security Administration.
2.	Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene	\$3,091,971	Maternal and child health services.
3.	Johns Hopkins University, Physics and Astronomy Dept.	\$1,500,000	Rocket and laboratory studies in astronomy.
4.	East Baltimore Development, Inc.	\$994,100	Redevelopment activities in coordination with the Oliver community.
5.	Johns Hopkins University	\$356,675	Grant to research speech loss.
6.	Chase Brexton Health Services	\$423,125	Expansion of health services.
7.	Center Stage Associates	\$55,000	To support the production of Kwame Kwei-Armah's play "Elima's Kitchen."
8.	Johns Hopkins University - Project Director Deborah Poole	\$40,000	National Endowment for Humanities grant for research project on Mexico.
9.	University of Maryland-Baltimore - Project Director Marjoleine Kars	\$40,000	National Endowment for Humanities grant for research project on slave rebellion.
10.	University of Maryland - Baltimore - Project Director Christoph Irmscher	\$40,000	National Endowment for humanities grant for research project on the biography of American scientist Louis Agassiz.
11.	Museum for Contemporary Arts	\$10,000	To support a collaborative effort by the Douglas Memorial Community Church gospel choir and the University of Maryland to promote artistic commonalities between African Americans and Javanse/Balinese traditions.
12.	Kids on the Hill, Inc.	\$10,000	To support arts projects for youth between the ages of 8 and 18.
13.	Shriver Hall Concern Series	\$10,000	To support the performance of work commissioned by Tobias Pickler.
14.	One Church, One Child of Maryland, Inc.	\$9,450	Support AmeriCorps Vista members who will assist in implementing a mentorship program to children of incarcerated parents.

Congressman Cummings to Reintroduce Lab Improvement Bill

In response to media reports that the Maryland Office of Health Care Quality found that two Baltimore medical labs had committed testing errors and possibly put patients at risk, Congressman Cummings pledged to reintroduce the *Clinical Laboratory Compliance Improvement Act* when the 109th Congress reconvenes. The bill aims to ensure that labs performing medical testing comply with federal standards.

Congressman Cummings has actively addressed lab safety issues at the nation's laboratories since such problems were originally reported in the Baltimore area in March 2004. As a result, in May and July of this year, he called for and was granted two congressional hearings through the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources.

The hearings revealed the need for better oversight of medical laboratories, especially those labs which serve Medicare and Medicaid patients.

"The recent incidences reported at two Baltimore-area laboratories clearly demonstrate a widespread pattern of medical laboratory failure with regards to accurate operations," Congressman Cummings said. "When patients receive inaccurate lab results, their lives and the lives of those with whom they have contact can become at risk. Therefore, inaccurate lab testing anywhere in the United States is a threat to public health and safety."

In addition to requiring medical testing labs to conform to federal safety standards, the bill will also include whistleblower protections for employees who alert appropriate authorities about medical lab safety violations. This provision is significant since many lab testing inaccuracies have been revealed only when employees reported the problems.

In the meantime, Congressman Cummings said that he will continue to work with the private lab accreditation agencies such as the College of American Pathologists (CAP) to help ensure safer lab testing.

"Lab compliance is a life and death issue. Almost all Americans undergo lab testing at some point in their lives and rely on the accuracy of the results. Therefore, we cannot allow the problem of inaccurate lab tests to perpetuate," Congressman Cummings said.

Congressman Cummings's District Offices

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Baltimore, MD 21201**
(410) 685-9199 and (410) 685-9399 fax

**754 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Maryland 21228**
(410) 719-8777 and (410) 455-0110 fax

Howard County Outreach Centers

First Monday of the Month:
Glenwood Library, 2350 Route 97
Cooksville, MD 21723
**Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by
appointment**

Second Monday of the Month:
Howard County Central Library
10375 Little Patuxent Pkwy.
Columbia, MD 21044
**Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by
appointment**

Second Wednesday of the Month:
Savage Library, 9525 Durness Lane
Laurel, MD 20723
**Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by
appointment**

Third Monday of the Month:
Florence Bain Senior Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia, MD 21044
**Hours: 9:00AM - 11 AM or by
appointment**

Fourth Monday of the Month: